

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
WILLIAM A. HINTON STATE LABORATORY INSTITUTE  
RABIES LABORATORY  
305 SOUTH STREET  
JAMAICA PLAIN, MA 02130**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SENDING SPECIMENS FOR RABIES TESTING**

**Specimen types:**

**Ensure that animals submitted are dead.** All animals involved in exposures of humans or domestic animals will be tested. With the exception of bats, send the **head only**. "Road kills" may not be appropriate for testing and should not be sent if the head is severely damaged.

**Materials:**

- 2 zipper-lock or otherwise sealable, leak-proof plastic bags
- absorbent material (pads, paper towels, etc.)
- 1 frozen cool pack. **Do Not Use Ice**
- 1 pair disposable gloves
- 1 permanent marker
- self-sticking document pouches
- labels to identify specimens on bags and forms
- 1 mailing container (cardboard box or plastic foam)
- cushioning material (newspaper, etc.)
- biohazard label
- Rabies Lab shipping label (UN3373- Category B)
- Specimen Request for Rabies Testing, SS-RA-1-08

**Requisition to use:** State Laboratory Specimen Request for Rabies Testing, SS-RA-1-08.

Fill out a specimen request form for each animal submitted.

**Container for Specimen:**

1. If submitting more than one specimen, ensure that each specimen is individually double wrapped and packaged. Identify each wrapped specimen by marking a number on the outer plastic bag. Fill out a specimen request form for each individual specimen submitted and mark the corresponding number from the specimen bag onto the matching specimen form.
2. **Wearing gloves to package specimen.** Wrap the head in an absorbent pad and place the specimen into a plastic bag. Seal the bag. Place a biohazard label on the outside of the bag. Do not place specimen request form in with the specimens. Do not include gloves worn in with the specimen.
3. Place the bagged specimen into the larger plastic bag with additional absorbent material to absorb any specimen liquid.
4. Place a prefrozen cold pack into the bag. **DO NOT USE ICE.** Seal the bag.
5. Place the wrapped, double-bagged specimen inside a cardboard box or foam container with adequate cushioning material. Seal the box. Place a self-sticking document pouch on one side of the cardboard box or foam container. Place all completed Specimen Submission Forms for Rabies Testing into the document pouch and seal the pouch.

**DO NOT PLACE THE SPECIMEN REQUEST FORM(S) INSIDE THE BOX WITH THE SPECIMEN(S).**

**Storage condition of specimen once collected:** Keep refrigerated until sent to State Laboratory.

Do not freeze specimens. Frozen specimens will delay testing by at least 1 business day and increase the chance of an unsatisfactory testing result. If the specimen is frozen accidentally, keep frozen during transport. Specimens should be delivered as soon as possible.

**Shipping instructions:**

Using the shipping/mailling label provided with this instruction form, complete the submitter's name, address and telephone number area on the label. Place the label on the outside of the box or foam container. Specimens for rabies testing are to be packaged and their containers marked in accordance with regulations for **UN3373- Biological Substances, Category B**. Specimens may be transported via U.S. Postal Service, commercial carriers (such as UPS, FedEx, DHL-Airborne Express, etc.), or private couriers to:

Rabies Laboratory

William A. Hinton State Laboratory Institute

305 South St., Jamaica Plain, MA, 02130

**Special notes:**

Animals involved in a human or domestic animal exposure will be tested as soon as possible. Results will be phoned to the submitter when testing is completed. Specimens received by 12:00 pm Monday through Friday will be tested the same day. After normal working hours, contact the Bureau of Communicable Disease Control (BCDC) with regard to emergency testing requests at (617) 983-6800. The State Laboratory does not charge for rabies testing.

**Questions:** Monday through Friday between 8am and 5pm for testing and specimen transport contact the Rabies Laboratory at (617) 983-6385. Questions (24/7) concerning exposures, the need for testing and prophylaxis call the BCDC at (617) 983-6800.

From:

Person Responsible

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTN: RABIES LABORATORY  
MASS. DEPT. OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
WILLIAM A. HINTON  
STATE LABORATORY INSTITUTE  
305 SOUTH STREET  
JAMAICA PLAIN, MA 02130-3597



**UN 3373**

**BIOLOGICAL  
SUBSTANCES,  
CATEGORY B**

ML-RA-1-08

CUT SHIPPING LABEL ALONG DOTTED LINE.  
WRAP LABEL AROUND OUTSIDE OF SPECIMEN  
SHIPPING CONTAINER. SECURE LABEL TO  
CONTAINER WITH TAPE.

COPY THIS LABEL AS NEEDED